

POST SHORTS

Recycling schedule

The recycling pickup for Wednesday, Dec. 6, is plastic, glass and metal. Put items in blue bags and place them on the curb.



Look for Army Environmental Center ad during Army-Navy Game

If you are home watching the Army-Navy Game this Saturday, be on the lookout for an ad done by AEC concerning their support to protect our environment.

Letters from Santa

The American Red Cross announces a special holiday delivery direct from the North Pole. Santa will send personalized letters to all children or adults on your shopping list with a uniquely-tailored holiday greeting. Santa's elves just need a little help from you in order for Santa to write his letters. Simply call 410-879-6984 or 410-838-4568 before Dec. 6 and leave your name and address to receive the personalized order form. The cost is \$5 per letter and benefits the lifesaving work of the American Red Cross.

Coming attractions at Bowling Center

Starting Dec. 1 the bowling center will lower its price for bowling to only a \$1 per game from 1 to 6 p.m. The price after 6 p.m. will remain \$2.25 per game.

Other events in December include the return of "Red Pins" and a "Cosmic Scotch Doubles" Tournament. Red Pins will run Monday through Friday 1 p.m. to 6 p.m. during the week of Dec. 4-8. If the red pin comes up as the head pin, let the counter person know, then throw a strike and receive a "FREE" game of bowling.

The Cosmic Scotch Doubles Tournament will be held Sunday, Dec. 3 at 1 p.m. Entry fee for the tournament is \$8 per person. Prize fund is based on total number of entries.

For more information call 410-278-4041.

Installation Restoration Advisory Board to meet

The Installation Restoration Program will hold its monthly Restoration Advisory Board meeting on Thursday, Nov. 30, 7 to 9:45 p.m., at the

See SHORTS, page 2

APG
Pollution
PREVENTION

Tip of the Week

To reduce solid waste, borrow, rent or share infrequently used items.



For more information on pollution prevention, call Michelle Guitard, APG Pollution Prevention Program, 410-306-2273

Dining facilities strut their 'stuff'ing

By Yvonne Johnson
APG News

The Thanksgiving Day holiday inspires feelings of warmth, friendship, and an appreciation for past and future blessings.

When you combine it with a spirit of competition, you get a heightened state of readiness, performance and execution, much like the atmosphere within the post's dining facilities during the annual Thanksgiving Day Competition held early Thursday morning.

Directed by Chief Warrant Officer Tommy Benbow Sr., the installation executive food program manager, the competition pits the three facilities serving the holiday meal against each other in three categories: appearance of the dining room and displays; food presentation and preparation; and the appearance, knowledge and serving skills of the food service personnel.

Benbow led a group of evaluators through the three APG facilities starting with building E-4225 in the Edgewood Area then pro-

gressing to buildings 4503 and 4219 in the Aberdeen Area.

Command Sgt. Maj. Carlos Estronza from the U.S. Army Soldier and Biological Chemical Command was the senior member of the selection committee. The other members were Sgt. 1st Class Stewart Nagel from the Noncommissioned Officer Academy, Pvt. Sean Ardilla, from Company B, 16th Ordnance Battalion and Airman Joshua Waller from the U.S. Air Force Detachment.

At each facility, lavish displays, ice sculptures and tantalizing aromas greeted the evaluators, who, with clipboards in hand, canvassed the kitchen and dining areas while sampling morsels of the culinary delights that awaited holiday diners.

Benbow said the competition was close with the winner decided by four and one half points.

The 2000 Thanksgiving Day Competition was won by Dining Facility 4503, operated by Gerard Laruffa, dining facility manager and Anna Ptak, assistant manager.



Photos by LA'MONT HARBISON

Above, Command Sgt. Maj. Carlos Estronza, U.S. Army Soldier and Biological Chemical Command, places a gold medallion for culinary excellence on a sugar-coated flat icing cake with edible leaves on display in the dining facility in building 4219 during the annual Thanksgiving Day competition between Aberdeen Proving Ground dining facilities. Left, the main table in the dining facility in building 4503 featured a "Maryland" seafood display of lobster, crab legs, shrimp, oysters, clams and salmon, and a fruit-filled ice basket. Under the management of Gerard Laruffa, this dining facility took overall first place in the annual contest.

USO-Metro kicks off holiday hotel program

By Dawn Ruth
USO Metro

The United Service Organization of Metropolitan Washington is joining with civic-minded Washington area hotels to provide complimentary hotel/motel room nights to visiting families of service members who are unable to travel home for the holidays.

Each year USO-Metro works with the Hospitality Sales & Marketing Association International to provide these free hotel accommodations so that service members can spend the holidays with loved ones. The program is designed to help junior enlisted personnel, many of whom do not have enough leave time accrued to travel home. Many are also considered essential personnel at their duty stations and cannot leave.

"This program has grown from one participating hotel in 1984 to 25 hotels in 1999. We are delighted that we can unite families at this special time of year," said USO-Metro president Elaine Rogers. "USO has become synonymous with helping our enlisted personnel and being there to make their holiday brighter."

The program runs from Dec. 20 through 30. Eligibility is limited to enlisted personnel in grades E1 to E6. No more than

See HOLIDAY HOTEL, page 13

Diving team at test center adds expertise

By Mike Cast
DTC Public Affairs

Scuba divers at the Aberdeen Test Center in can get a real blast out of diving. They can also get a simulated blast, shoot documentary film footage, provide divers for underwater operations and military tests, and add a margin of safety for equipment trials in or over the water.

With nearly two dozen divers from various test-center organizations on APG, the diving team is comprised of engineers who direct tests of military weapons and equipment, technicians who perform underwater welding and construction, underwater explosives specialists and photographers and divers with a range of skills that support underwater work for the military.

Members of the team not only dive on a cost-reimbursable basis for military organizations and other customers who need this type of service, they also volunteer to help local police and fire-department diving teams in search operations.

"It's a very diverse group of people, but they all have the same goal in mind - to do (military) testing under water, or basically do any underwater work required," said Bill Mullis, an ATC engineer who leads divers in various underwater tasks and oversees their training. "Our claim to fame, I guess, would be amphibious vehicle testing, underwater photography and videography, explosives testing and underwater vegetation

mapping for the Maryland Department of Natural Resources."

Among other missions, the team has been called on to assist with amphibious vehicle training at places such as Fort Knox, Ky. Having divers on standby in case of an accident or entrapment in a vehicle reassures commanders that their troops will be safe during training, Mullis said. Closer to home, members of the diving team have been helping with tests of naval hardware at ATC's under-

water explosion test facility, mapping submerged aquatic vegetation in the Chesapeake Bay on behalf of U.S. Army Garrison Aberdeen Proving Ground, and assisting the development of a ship-to-shore causeway system at Norfolk, Va.

"The causeway system consists of something like bridge pieces connected together to offload military equipment," Mullis explained. "We provide scuba-certified divers for operating those, and for driving the equip-

ment they pull on and off. We're testing all the military hardware available - M1 tanks, 2 1/2-ton trucks, 5-ton trucks, the heavy equipment transporter.

"Every diver we send down there to operate equipment is scuba certified because of the danger of being over open water. They're prepared to go in the water in case the system fails. They carry scuba cylinders and a mask with them, and they're

See DIVING, page 4



Photo by Glen Hurd

Rick Winiarczyk, a member of the Aberdeen Test Center diving team, surveys submerged aquatic vegetation in the Chesapeake Bay.

POST SHORTS

SHORTS, from front page

Edgewood Senior Center on Gateway Road. The topics will be Carroll Island and Graces Quarters. Board meetings are open to the public. All APG employees and citizens are invited. For more information, call the information line at 410-272-8842 or 1-800-APG-9998.

Air Force recruiter in Festival at Bel Air

Senior Airman LaTonya LaSala is the new Air Force recruiter in Harford County, located in the Festival in Bel Air. Her job is to inform local high school students about the Air Force and assist anyone who is interested in joining. She is available to answer questions and talk about concerns and beneficial opportunities.

LaSala is currently being assisted by Airman Telisa Turner who just graduated from basic training and technical training. Turner is a local recruit form Aberdeen, and graduated from Harford Technical High School in Bel Air.

For more information call LaSala at 410-569-2254.

Gift wrapping at Harford Mall for charity

Representatives from the American Medical Center Cancer Research Center and the Johns Hopkins Pediatric Oncology Center will be wrapping gifts at the Harford Mall 10 a.m. to 10 p.m., Sunday, Dec. 10 through Sunday, Dec. 24. Corporate orders are invited. Celebrate your holidays by supporting cancer research. All gifts are welcome, including those not purchased at the mall.

For information call 410-879-5015.

Harford Community College offers ESOL classes

English for Speakers of Other Languages classes will be offered free to foreign-born adults who are 16 or older. Classes will be held Monday, Dec. 4 at 6:30 p.m., at Edgewood High School; Tuesday, Dec. 5 at 6:30 p.m., at the Aberdeen Community Center; Wednesday, Dec. 6 at 6:30 p.m., at Bel Air High School; and Friday, Dec. 8 at 10 a.m., at the Aberdeen Community Center. Room numbers for the advising sessions will be posted on the front door of the building.

For more information about ESOL classes, call Cindy Fisher at Harford Community College, 410-836-4152.

Women who enjoy singing

The Upper Chesapeake Chapter of Sweet Adelines International, a professional womens’ a cappella chorus, rehearses Mondays at Bel Air Elementary School in Bel Air, 7 p.m. This award-winning group welcomes interested women singers to learn four-part harmony, vocal technique, choreography, and stage presence, and to perform with us at the many community events, shows and private parties where we sing each year.

For more information, call 410-877-7314, 410-838-0921 or 410-477-5166.

GED Preparation classes

The Community and Business Services Division of Harford Community College offers tuition-based General Education Degree preparation classes to help adults earn a Maryland high school diploma. Free Adult Basic Education classes are also offered to help adults strengthen reading, writing and math skills. Adults new to the program should attend one of the following free advising sessions to receive information about the programs and to sign up for classes.

Monday, Dec. 4 at 6:30 p.m., Edgewood High School

Tuesday, Dec. 5 at 6:30 p.m., Aberdeen Community Center and Harford Community College, Edgewood Hall

Wednesday, Dec. 6 at 10 a.m., Edgewater Village Shopping Center and Edgewood Health/Community Services Center

Thursday, Dec. 7 at 6:30 p.m., North Harford High School

Friday, Dec. 8 at 10 a.m., Aberdeen Community Center.

For more information, Call Cindy Fisher at Harford Community College, 410-836-4152.

Army Band takes holiday leave

The 389th Army Band (AMC’s Own) will be on leave Dec. 20 through Jan. 3 and, therefore, not available for commitments. Any questions regarding scheduling the Band should be referred to Judy Michalski, 278-7953/2711.

Blue Cross and Blue Shield representative to visit APG Dec. 12

The Civilian Personnel Advisory Center has made arrangements for a claims representative of the Service Benefit Plan Blue Cross/Blue Shield to visit APG on Tuesday, Dec. 12. The representative will be available from 9 to 1130 a.m. in building 305, Room B-14 (lower level) to discuss claim problems and plan coverage. The representative will also be available in the Edgewood Area Stark Recreation Center, building E-4140 from 12:30 to 1:30 p.m.

No appointment is necessary. Point of contact for this information is Teri Wright, 410-278-4331.

Hoyle Health and Fitness Center

If you are a civilian and want to participate in an organized fitness program in the Edgewood Area, call the Hoyle Health and Fitness Center for information on the Civilian Fitness Program. The CFP is a six-month, one-time program established to help employees establish a fitness program. One of our staff members will take you through a health risk analysis and develop a one-on-one exercise program geared just for your exercise needs. The fitness center is a full service facility with aerobic and toning classes, state-of-the-art equipment that includes treadmills, recumbent bikes, steppers, elliptical cross trainers, rowers and cross-country ski machines. We also have free weights and full-circuit weight machines. Stop in today to set up your personal training program. Hours of operation are Monday-Thursday 5:30 a.m. to 7:30 p.m., Friday 5:30 a.m. to 6 p.m. and Saturday 8 a.m. to 12 p.m. For further information, call 410-436-7134/7135.

NECPOC announces leadership courses

Management Decision-Making and Problem Solving will be offered by the U.S. Department of Agriculture Graduate School Feb. 27-28, 8:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m. at Aberdeen Proving Ground. Tuition is \$245.

The course is designed for managers who want to enhance their leadership skills by solving problems more efficiently and making sound decisions. Nominations must be received in the Northeast Civilian Personnel Operations Center, Human Resources Development Division, by Nov. 30.

Leadership Skills for Non-Supervisors will be offered Apr. 10-11, 8:30 a.m.-4 p.m. at the U.S. Military Academy, West Point, by the U.S. Department of Agriculture Graduate School. Tuition is \$245.

This course is designed for team leaders, office coordinators, special emphasis program managers and all non-supervisory employees who want to enhance their leadership skills. It includes instruction in handling different personality types, the art of giving constructive feedback that minimizes defensiveness, effective delegation, overcoming conflict without making enemies; and building teams that work well together and get results. Nominations must be received in the NECPOC, HRDD, by Jan. 19. For more information contact Karin Hancock, 410-306-0065 or e-mail her at Karin.Hancock@cpocner.apg.army.mil.

AA Health and Fitness Center

If you are active duty and retired military, civilian employees, retired employees and their family members 14-21 years of age or contractors located on post, you are eligible to join the Fitness Center located in building 320 in the Aberdeen Area. A full line of cardiovascular equipment, free weights and full-circuit weight machines is available. Need a personal one-on-one program? Call and set up an appointment today with one of our staff members. We also offer Aerobic and Toning Classes daily with a certified instructor. All these services are included in one low price. Our hours of operation are Monday-Thursday, 5:30 a.m. to 7 p.m., Friday 5:30 a.m. to 6 p.m. and Saturday 8 a.m.-12 p.m. For more information call 410-278-9725/9759.

Within your reach!

Get answers about how the Army is safely eliminating the mustard agent stockpile stored at Aberdeen Proving Ground. Call or visit the Edgewood Chemical Stockpile Outreach Office located in the Woodbridge Station Shopping Center, 1011B Woodbridge Center Way, Edgewood, 410-676-6800. The office is open 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday through Friday. Current information is also available at www-pmcd.apgea.army.mil.

Edgewood Arts and Crafts Center to hold classes

Porcelain Doll class: A beginning porcelain doll class will begin Dec. 1 and continue Dec. 8 and 15, 9:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m. Students will make the Sugar Britches doll. Class size is limited; pre-registration is required. Cost is \$30 plus supplies.

Framing class: A beginning matting and framing class will be held Nov. 30, 5:30-9:30 p.m. Students must bring an 8-inch by 10-inch picture to frame. Cost is \$15 plus supplies. Students must register in advance as space is limited.

The center is open from Thursday, 1-9 p.m., and Friday and Saturday, 9 a.m.-5 p.m., and is available to active duty military, APG civilians and their dependents. It is located in building E-4440 next to the MP station; signs are posted to direct people to the building. For more information, call 410-436-2153 during operating hours.

Thrift Savings Plan Open Season

Thrift Savings Plan is open for changes to enrollment until Jan. 31. During the open enrollment period employees may elect to enroll in TSP or change their current TSP deduction. Thrift Savings Plan Open Season Update Pamphlets will be distributed to agency administrative offices upon receipt in the Civilian Personnel Advisory Center.

Employees must now contact the Army Benefits Center-Civilian (ABC-C) to make an open season change. Enrollment form TSP-1 can no longer be completed or processed by the CPAC. Employees may call the ABC-C at 1-877-276-9287 or access the website at www.abc.army.mil to enroll in TSP or make a change.

Employees who wish to change the way their TSP account balance is currently invested must request a TSP Interfund Transfer. Interfund transfers can be made up to once a month by calling the ThriftLine at 504-255-8777 or by completing a TSP-30, Interfund Transfer Request, available on the TSP website, www.tsp.gov. The TSP website includes current TSP information, forms and publications.

Volunteers needed for special emphasis program committees

APG Special Emphasis Employment Program committees are seeking individuals, civilian or military, to fill vacancies on the following committees:

- Native American Employment Program Committee
- Disability Employment Program Committee
- Hispanic Employment Program Committee
- Black Employment Program Committee
- Asian/Pacific American Employment Program Committee
- Federal Women’s Program Committee

Interested personnel may contact David Burbey, garrison special emphasis program manager, at 410-278-1145.

Federal employees Health Benefits Open Season

A Federal Employees Health Benefits Open Season will be held through Dec. 11. Employees will no longer be required to complete SF-2809, Health Benefits Elections Form, to make health benefits changes. Employees will be able to contact the Army Benefits Center-Civilian (ABC-C) at 1-877-276-9287 or www.abc.army.mil to make open season elections electronically - a faster and easier way to make the necessary changes. For more information call Teri Wright, 410-278-4331 at the APG Civilian Personnel Advisory Center.

Re-Nu-It centers’ winter hours

The Re-Nu-It centers in the Aberdeen and Edgewood areas will begin winter hours of operation on Nov. 20. Aberdeen Area hours are Monday, Tuesday and Thursday 8 a.m.-4:30 p.m.; Edgewood Area hours are Wednesday and Friday 8 a.m.-4:30. For more information call Ellery Blake at 410-306-1108.

Jewelry offered by EA-OWC

The Edgewood Area Officers’ Wives Club is offering opportunities to contribute to the APG community. EA-OWC member and jewelry designer Laura Pool has crafted and donated a 37.65 carat earring and pendant set of golden citrine and freshwater pearls mounted in 14 karat gold. The earrings are set with a large pear-shaped golden citrine and three dangling freshwater pearls. The pendant features a pearl-enhancer bail and two large unusually-cut golden citrines joined together end-to-end with four freshwater pearls between and three dangling below. The set is valued at \$1,700.

The club is offering opportunities to win the set at \$1 per ticket, or six tickets for \$5. Proceeds will benefit local organizations and charities. The winning ticket will be drawn at the club’s holiday cookie exchange on Dec. 13. Tickets are on sale throughout the APG community or by contacting Amy Steiger at 410-272-1520.

Holiday food and toy drive

The 15th annual U.S. Army Soldier and Chemical Biological Command Food and Toy Drive to help Neighbors Involved in the Community of Edgewood is now in full swing.

Last year 44 families were recipients of the donations and this year NICE expects a need for 50 families. The organization serves families in Edgewood and Joppatowne with many of them being single-parent households. NICE works to improve the quality of life in these communities by focusing on education, recreation, safety, crime prevention, and drug and alcohol abuse.

NICE gives each family two bags of groceries and determines the toy needs from a form filled out by the family. The food and toys are delivered to the families’ homes and the donations are kept private.

We need new or gently-used toys, non-perishable foods, and/or household products. Also, toiletries, grooming supplies, compact disks, note paper and cards are among requested items. Food items with expired dates cannot be used.

Opened food products and broken or unusable toys will not be accepted or given. Let’s try to make this the best Toy and Food Drive we have sponsored. With everyone’s help, it is possible.

The closing reception and presentation of donations will be on Dec. 13 in the Berger Laboratory cafeteria, building E3549, at 1 p.m.

All donations will be picked up and placed in a secure area until items are delivered to NICE.

APG News

The *APG News*, a civilian enterprise newspaper, is an authorized publication for members of the U.S. Army. Contents of the *APG News* are not necessarily official views of, or endorsed by, the U.S. government, Department of Defense, Department of the Army or the U.S. Army Garrison, Aberdeen Proving Ground. The newspaper is published weekly by the APG Public Affairs Office, ATTN: AMSSB-GIM-P, APG, MD 21005-5005, 410-278-1150. Printed circulation is 13,500.

Everything advertised in this publication shall be made available for purchase, use or patronage without regard to race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, marital status, physical handicap, political affiliation or any other nonmerit factor of the purchaser, user or patron. If a violation or rejection of this equal opportunity policy by an advertiser is confirmed, the printer shall refuse to print advertising from that source.

Editorial content is prepared, edited and approved by the APG Public Affairs Office. The *APG News* is printed by Homestead Publishing Company, a private firm in no way connected with the Department of the Army, under exclusive written contract with APG. The civilian printer is responsible for commercial advertising. The appearance of advertising in this publication, including inserts or supplements, does not constitute endorsement by the Department of the Army or Homestead Publishing Company of the products or services advertised.

For advertising matters, call Homestead Publishing, 410-838-4400. Send articles or information for publication to the APG Public Affairs Office, Building 324, Second Floor, AMSSB-GIM-P, APG, MD 21005-5005; call the editor at 410-278-1150, DSN 298-1150; fax it to 410-278-2570; or e-mail it to editor@apg.army.mil. Deadline for copy is Thursday at noon for the following Thursday’s paper.

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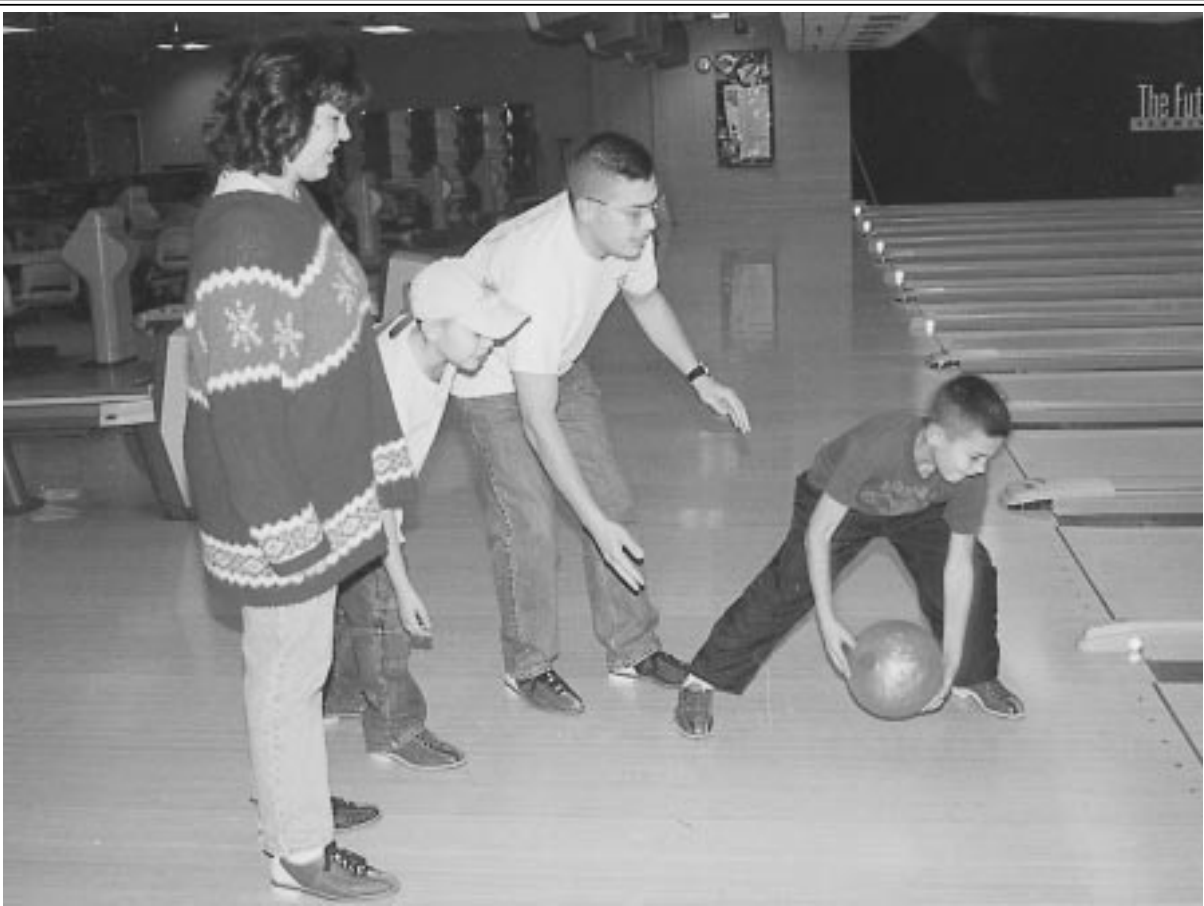


Photo by SHEILA LITTLE

This Edgewood Area family took advantage of some of the specials offered at the APG Bowling Facility during Army Family Week, Nov. 19-25. Saluting the important role of the family in military life, Army families are recognized each year with discounts and specials throughout the installation. Joseph Perez, 7, tries for a strike with guidance from his father, Sgt. 1st Class Jesus Perez of the 520th Theater Area Medical Laboratory. The bowler’s mother Marcey, and big brother Jesse, 10 1/2, offer words of encouragement.

APG volunteer of month offers warm welcome

By Sheila Little
APG News

Lisa Costas is the Aberdeen Proving Ground volunteer of the month for November. The wife of Maj. Dean Costas of the Technical Escort Unit, and mother of two daughters, Costas immersed herself in volunteering on the installation as soon as she settled into her Austin Road quarters last summer.

Her first stop was the Edgewood Area branch of Army Community Service. While in temporary housing, the Costas family was visited by long-time ACS volunteer Hattie Sanford. Impressed with the friendly manner and helpful information received from Sanford, Costas decided to add her assistance to ACS, and now helps maintain the Edgewood Area's ACS branch office and deliver welcome packets to APG newcomers.

Although she works full-time as an educator for Harford County Schools, the volunteer schedules time to make her newcomer visits in the evenings, on school holidays or on weekends, carving the time out of a schedule filled with family activities and other obligations.

Armed with a packet of useful community information and phone numbers and wearing a warm smile, Costas is often the first friendly face new residents see.

"She's really been a lot of help with the "Hi Neighbor program," Sanford said.

"She's friendly and outgoing, and as an involved member of the military community, she really relates to the newcomers."

A wife, mother, teacher, and family chauffeur, Costas is an active participant in the TEU Family Support Group.

Susan Lindamood, wife of the unit's commander, said Costas is a valuable member of the TEU family.

"She has a knack for getting people involved and becoming a part of the group. She brings a positive attitude to any situation, and her warmth and genuineness

help make people feel comfortable and welcome," Lindamood said.

She added that Costas has planned and supported unit activities since the family arrived last summer.

"Lisa organized an aggressive newcomer's program to welcome people to the unit," said Lindamood. "She also did a lot of work to keep in touch with the spouses of deployed soldiers, making sure they were aware of unit activities or just checking up on them. Without fail, she supports every activity or function we have in TEU."

Lindamood, who met the busy volunteer at a previous assignment several years ago, said Costas, a military spouse for the last 14 years, donates time and effort wherever the family goes.

Costas' volunteering does not stop with two organizations. She also is a member of the Edgewood Area Officers' Wives Club Board. As the program chairman, her schedule does not always permit attendance at all meetings, but she

faithfully arranges interesting speakers or activities for the monthly luncheons. In addition, Costas supports the Edgewood Elementary Parent Teacher Association, and volunteers at the school when time permits.

Becky Oldenburg, a member of the family support unit and school PTA, said Costas is concerned for others and is generally in the midst of a welcome program or fund-raising for a good cause. Oldenburg added that Costas also had a part in a recent program designed to help interest students in the sciences.

"She gives her time to help in a lot of areas, not just with one group. She really tries to cover it all," Oldenburg said.

"I enjoy volunteering," Costas said, and added that she was inspired by the willing devotion of her mother, who, as a retiree, is still an active volunteer.

"As I was growing up, I saw my mom work full-time, go to games, programs or other family activities, and still find the time to volunteer in the community,"

Costas said.

She said her mother donated many hours to several organizations and community projects over the years, and added that her mother's efforts and that of other volunteers helped establish the first Ronald McDonald house in the Charleston, S.C., area.

Included in many of her mother's volunteer endeavors as a child, the need to reach out to others was passed on to Costas, who hopes to pass it on to her children. Christina, 10, a fifth grader, and Michaela, 7, in second grade, can frequently be found accompanying their mother as she greets new community or unit members. Costas said both daughters seem interested in giving back to others, something the volunteer finds satisfying, enjoyable and rewarding.

"It's the people you meet that makes it fun, and that's what it's all about," she said.

APG is always looking for community volunteers. For a list of possibilities, call the Office of the Installation Volunteer Coordinator, 410-278-5469.



Photo by SHEILA LITTLE

Volunteer of the month Lisa Costas poses with daughters Michaela, 7, and Christina, 10. The girls frequently accompany their mother as she welcomes new APG residents, learning the rewards of volunteerism.

Divers and testers work as a team

DIVING, from front page

dressed properly for exposure protection in the water. A lot of people don't realize that you can't just dive on scuba cylinder without knowing how the equipment works. Given that fact and the fact that drivers can become entrapped in a vehicle if it did go under water, we want scuba-certified personnel operating the equipment. It's a big safety issue."

The emphasis on safety is underscored by the training requirements that team members must meet. No one gets to be on the team without a training certification that is at least the equivalent of the rescue-diver rating offered by recreational scuba organizations, Mullis said. Team members receive periodic underwater training on- and off-post and are trained to use mixed-gas and nitrogen/oxygen breathing equipment.

All are certified as first-aid medics. One diver is trained to perform neurological medical exams in the field, and more than half of the divers are certified to operate the onsite decompression chamber at ATC's underwater explosion pond, a 150-foot-deep body of water, known as the "superpond," where the Army carries out shock testing on submarine and ship components, as well as other explosive testing.

ATC also operates a smaller, 55 feet deep pond for underwater explosions and tests in another location on APG.

When the UNDEX facility was about to begin operating, members of the diving team traveled to Orlando to test an explosives

deployment system in a 240-foot-deep grotto filled with spring water. Mark Stern, an ATC technical photographer who leads the divers who do underwater photography and videography, recalled the problems encountered in making the system work according to plan.

"One of the things we had to do was find a way to deploy a charge to different depths," Stern said. "The idea was to use a gas-filled balloon to lower it, and then if you had to retrieve it because you had a misfire or something, inflate the balloon to make it come up. They were doing this with about a 300-pound inert charge to depths of about 120 feet, and we had several guys in place to videotape this thing. One of the times they inflated the balloon, it went off course, hit one of the underwater platforms and took it out. This is the kind of thing that can happen when you're doing research and development work, so you always have to be alert and aware of your surroundings. We're doing work that we have to remember is sometimes dangerous."

Mullis said one of his more memorable experiences was diving to support the test of a Bradley armored vehicle in the Susquehanna River in northern Maryland.

"Swimming the Bradley below the Conowingo Dam in a 4 1/2 mph current was interesting," he recalled. "We had to make a couple of practice rescue dives down to 20 feet in that current, and if you've ever climbed a rope in gym class, that's basically what it felt like going to the bottom of the

river, because the current was so stiff. You had to wrap your legs around a rope and pull yourself down. If you turned your face to one side or the other, the current was so fast it would take the mask right off your head."

Although the divers get paid for most of their work, they dive on a volunteer basis when someone turns up missing in the water and the fire or sheriff's department needs assistance.

The team has been called to help with search efforts on three occasions, and twice found the drowning victims. In one instance, the team found the body of a man who had struck his head on a trestle after falling from the Route 40 bridge over the Susquehanna River in Havre de Grace. They found him in 65 feet of water after searching for about an hour. On another occasion, they found the body of a boy who had been missing for four days.

The team's methodical search patterns helped others find the body of a Havre de Grace firefighter who had drowned while searching for an anchor that had come loose from his boat, Mullis said.

"We use intricate search patterns in dark water to help us find things," he said. "In some of areas of the river and (Chesapeake) bay, the lights go out at about 10 feet. If you could picture the darkest room you've ever been in, it is probably not as dark as some of the water we dive in here. It's unbelievable."

Both Mullis and Stern emphasized the more enjoyable aspects of diving for the Army, including

the opportunity to take part in a wide variety of interesting military test projects in far away locations.

"If there is a common theme among divers and ATC testers, it is that ATC is not limited to one type of test," Stern said. "ATC tests big guns, missiles, wheeled vehicles, tracked vehicles, diving - really a wide variety of testing. That is something very unique."

Future Army marching right on schedule

By Master Sgt. Jon Connor
Army News Service

WASHINGTON (Oct. 23, 2000) — The plan to develop and field the future Army remains on schedule, said the chief overseer of the new fighting force at a media update briefing at the Pentagon.

Maj. Gen. James Dubik, Training and Doctrine Command’s deputy commanding general for Transformation, told reporters Oct. 20 that “everything has started on time and on schedule” in developing the Objective Force.

Dubik, who has headed up organizing and training the Initial Brigade Combat Teams since last October, will soon depart to become the commanding general of the 25th Infantry Division at Schofield Barracks, Hawaii.

“Transformation” as it is called, is the process of developing a new fighting infrastructure that is partly based on self-sufficient brigade-size units. The IBCTs will be “changing all the items associated with combat power,” he said. IBCTs are designed to deploy quickly, be agile, very lethal, and be sustainable to meet the missions of today’s unique post-Cold War Army, Dubik said.

Because Army doctrine developed decades ago required a major overseas airport and seaport to receive incoming troops and equipment, the need to develop a new strategy was evident, Dubik said referring the prolonged Gulf War buildup of forces in Saudi Arabia.

“Do you think the next one (conflict) is going to be that way?” Dubik rhetorically asked. “The answer is no.”

The new doctrine could employ “vertical envelopment” which means large units would have the capability to be dropped behind enemy lines to quickly move out, Dubik said.

“We’re changing the governing ideas of our Army,” he said. Dubik cited immediate changes at locations like Fort Lewis, Wash., where the ICBTs are being developed and trained; Fort Benning, Ga., where lieutenants are being educated on the new doctrine; and, Fort Lee, Va., where radically different approaches on logistics support are underway.

Also tied in with transformation is the way leaders communicate to each other and their subordinates.

“The senior gets the subordinates together to collaborate,” Dubik said. During training, leaders at different levels work a problem and then come together to discuss, he said.

“It gives the company depth in its leader-oriented decision-making process. It helps them to learn to think like their seniors,” Dubik said.

“More and more is asked of junior leaders,” Dubik said, citing such diverse missions in Panama, Haiti, Bosnia and Kosovo.

The IBCT transformation is a stair-step process, the general said, which continues with the delivery of several hundred Interim Armored Vehicles to replace the unit’s former vehicles in March 2001. While the future of today’s tanks and fighting vehicles remains to be seen, the interim armored vehicles and their successors are for certain.

“They’re not tanks. They’re not designed to be tanks,” Dubik explained. “They’re designed to go to places where tanks can’t go.

“You don’t want to be a force fighting this organization,” Dubik said.

“This force has Javelins in every platoon,” he said referring to the advanced anti-tank weapons system.

And, Dubik said, the Army is merging the infantryman military occupational specialties 11B and 11M.

Dubik acknowledged that the new Army emerging is not one without growing pains. One goal that is nearly completed is manning the Army’s 10 divisions at 100 percent. This consequently produced personnel problems in the organizational stability of losing units.

As of Sept. 30, only two division were less than 100 percent strength, Personnel Command reported.

“We need organizational stability,” Dubik said, adding that the deputy chief of staff of Personnel must redefine what organizational stability will mean.

“The governing ideas of our Army are coming into question,” he said. But by incorporating the new doctrine in TRADOC-run schools, soldiers will embrace the doctrine as the norm.

“They’re adapting very well. Very well,” he said. For many captains and sergeants on down, the post-Cold War is all they’ve known, Dubik said.

He added that while it’s natural for some to be nervous while being at the forefront, the feeling of excitement today’s young soldiers are experiencing cannot be denied.

“There’s high excitement in this stuff,” he said. “People like moving out and being first.”

Education at top of commissary shopping list

By Bonnie Powell
FORT LEE, Va.

The focus is on education this fall at the Defense Commissary Agency.

A new program offers a scholarship of \$1,500 or more to a college-bound military child at installations served by a commissary. More than one scholarship may be awarded at larger stores. DeCA operates nearly 290 commissaries worldwide.

The Defense Commissary Agency/Fisher House Foundation Scholarships For Military Children is a high priority with Maj. Gen. Robert J. Courter Jr., DeCA’s director.

“The program will enhance our local

commissaries as important quality of life benefactors for military families,” Courter said. “Our stores will be able to increase their impact by providing educational opportunities for the children of our military communities.

“The commissary system has long supported promotions with a focus on education,” he continued. “This program complements, and should not impact, existing local or regional scholarship programs awarded through installation activities, organizations affiliated with the military community, or scholarships funded by a particular vendor at a particular commissary.”

Many of the manufacturers and distrib-

utors who sell products through the commissary system are enthusiastically supporting the new scholarship program with their donations.

Students who are interested in applying for the scholarships can stop by their local commissary to pick up an application starting Dec. 1. Applications will also be available for download from the DeCA website at www.commissaries.com.

Richard Nornhold, manager of the Aberdeen Proving Ground commissary, encourages all eligible students to apply for a scholarship by filling out an application available through the commissary office or downloading an application from the web site. All applicants must

return their paperwork to the commissary where a store official will validate it for eligibility, no later than February 15, 2001.

“This is a great opportunity. We would love to see a winner at APG,” Nornhold said.

The scholarships are open to qualified sons and daughters of U.S. military ID card holders to include active duty, retirees, and guard/reserves. Students must have a 3.0 grade point average to qualify and write a short essay on “What Being a Military Dependent Means to Me.”

Students currently attending college may also be eligible to apply.

Scholarships offered for 2001 will be at least \$1,500 per commissary. Recipients will be notified by April 30.

Fisher House Foundation will administer the scholarship program and accept all industry donations earmarked for “Defense Commissary Agency/Fisher House Foundation Scholarships for Military Children.” The foundation also has retained an independent contractor to screen the scholarship applications. Well known for building and operating 26 comfort houses near military medical facilities, Fisher Houses offer a “home away from home” to military families who want to stay near loved ones during

See EDUCATION, page 13

Veterans Affairs loan program extended for Reserve Components

By Sgt. Chris Dunphy
Army News Service

WASHINGTON (Oct. 26) — National Guardsmen and reservists now have until Sept. 30, 2007, to apply for the Department of Veterans Affairs home loan guarantee.

“Our objective, though, is to make this a permanent option for reservists,” said Mike Cline, executive director for the Enlisted Association of the National Guard of the United States.

Started in 1992, the VA loan guarantee program was originally intended to expire in 1999. Since then, it has received two extensions: One to 2003, and just recently to 2007. Though welcomed, Cline said the extension actually defeats the original purpose of the guarantee.

“The VA loan guarantee program was originally intended as a recruiting tool,” he said. The problem with only extending the program is that a guardsman or reservist would still have to complete six years of service to receive the benefit. Therefore, only persons enlisting within the next two years would benefit.

Cline said there’s a great push—not only in his organization but in the VA as well—to permanently extend the program for reservists.

“VA wants to see the Guard and Reserve stay in the program,” he said. “One reason is that we pay 0.75 percent more on the funding fee (a VA-

required charge for home purchases) for first-time home purchases than our active-duty counterparts.”

Cline said this increase in revenue benefits the entire home loan program.

“In addition, the default rate is two-thirds lower for reservists as compared to the active-duty soldier,” he said.

Cline said he believes this is because homebuyers in the reserves tend to be older and more stabilized within a community.

According to Bob Gardner, national veterans field representative for the Veterans of Foreign Wars office in Washington, the VA guarantees loans for refinancing and purchasing homes—including condominiums and manufactured homes.

“VA guarantees part of the total loan permitting the purchaser to obtain a mortgage with a competitive rate,” he said.

Another benefit that VA offers the purchaser is the option of not making a down payment on the home, according to Chuck Owen, senior real estate loan officer for Armed Forces Bank on Fort Leavenworth.

Owen said the only required investment is what the VA calls the “funding fee.” He said this is a one-time cost that the veteran does not have to pay up front.

“You can either pay the fee at once or finance it into the loan amount,” he said.

Owen said the fee varies from

2.75 percent of the loan amount for a first-time purchase to 0.5 percent of the loan when the owner refinances.

Gardner said mortgage companies also benefit due to the loan’s protection factor.

“With a VA guarantee, the company is protected against loss

up to the amount of the guarantee if the borrower fails to repay the loan,” he said.

According to Gardner, to be eligible for a VA loan a guardsman or reservist must have completed six years of service, have been discharged under other than dishonorable conditions, or currently

ARL employee killed in I-95 accident

By Carol A. Ellis
ARL

Michael John Muuss, a long-time employee of Aberdeen Proving Ground’s U.S. Army Research Laboratory died tragically Nov. 20 from injuries sustained in a multi-vehicle accident on I-95 near his Havre de Grace home. He was 42 years old.

An Internet and network security pioneer, Muuss was born on Oct. 16, 1958 in Iowa City, Iowa. He was the son of Professor Emeritus Rolf Muuss and the late Gertrude L. Muuss, and the brother of Gretchen Frensemeier, all of Lutherville.

Muuss was an alumnus of Johns Hopkins University in Baltimore, where he earned a Bachelor of Engineering Sciences degree in Electrical Engineering in 1979.

Upon his graduation, he began a distinguished career in the federal service joining the U.S. Army Ballistic Research Laboratory (now the Army Research Laboratory) at APG.

Muuss remained with the laboratory his entire career, and held the position of senior computer scientist for the Ballistics and Nuclear, Biological Chemical

Division, Survivability/Lethality Analysis Directorate with the U.S. Army Research Laboratory at the time of his death.

Among his greatest accomplishments were his outstanding contributions to the birth of universal wide-area networking and the foundations of the Internet. He was one of four pioneers honored as speakers at the 25th anniversary celebration for the ARPANET, the university and government cooperative effort that was the forerunner of the worldwide network connectivity enjoyed today.

Muuss was the author of “Ping”, one of the most widely used network connectivity test programs and was an early contributor to the development of “TCP/IP.” His work and consummate knowledge of networking and computer security have been cited in dozens of open literature and government publications.

His many honors include the 1984 U.S. Army Research and Development award for “Network Interactive Computing.”

In 1990 Muuss was the U.S. government’s key witness in the case against Robert Morris, an event that focused national atten-



tion on the precedent-setting conviction of a computer hacker’s proliferation of a virus over the Internet.

In 1993 Muuss was a co-recipient of the USENIX lifetime achievement award for his years of contributions to the development of the UNIX operating system.

His strongest interest was in the area of modeling and simulation, with a particular fascination for producing computer-generated graphics to help understand the underlying models.

He was the principal architect for the BRL-CAD system, widely

recognized as the most advanced physically based computer aided design software in the world. He was awarded the 1999 U.S. Army Research and Development Achievement Award for technical excellence in the development of the BRL-CAD software suite. This package has been licensed to over 2000 sites around the world and is the Army’s most successful technology transfer program.

Muuss’ personal interests included a passion for computer history. He was the author of “History of Computing Information—50 years of Army Computing” published as part of “The World Wide Catalog” by InfoMagic.

He was an avid photographer and an accomplished videographer. His website, at <http://ftp.arl.army.mil/~mike> is a captivating archive of his endeavors.

Contributions in memory of Michael John Muuss, may be made to the American Red Cross, Attn: Finance Division, 4700 Mount Hope Drive, Baltimore, MD 21215 or the Nature Conservancy, 5410 Grosvenor Lane, Suite 100, Bethesda, MD 20814.

Master consultant named at USACHPPM

By Evelyn B. Riley
USACHPPM

Brian C. Zeichner, was awarded the esteemed title of Master Consultant at a ceremony held at the U.S. Army Center for Health Promotion and Preventive Medicine.

The Master Consultant Program was established in 1989 to designate those employees who have been recognized within the Department of the Army, the nation, and, in some cases, internationally as outstanding scientific and technical professionals. Nominees must be at least a grade 13 scientist or engineer and must be nominated by a program manager or higher.

Stephen L. Kistner, deputy for Technical Services, explained the history of the Master Consultant Program.

Brig. Gen. Lester Martinez-Lopez, commander, USACHPPM, presented the certificate to Zeichner.

“The Entomological Sciences Program has been a great environment receiving the certificate, Zeichner said upon receiving the certificate. “I have had excellent opportunities for personal development from presentation and computer skills to human effectiveness training.”

“I work with a great group of skilled, friendly, and cooperative people who I have learned a lot from over the years,” he said. “It is within this entomology team that I have found the great co-workers and col-

laborators which really made many of these contributions possible.”

Zeichner, an entomologist with the Entomological Sciences Program, was recognized for his sustained high-level contributions and personal impact in entomology. He has made significant contributions to the control of the German cockroach, historically the number one urban pest and the one on which DOD’s pest control shops have historically spent a full one-third of their time.

He is co-inventor of a patented lethal mosquito breeding container, an economical, minimal pesticide-use device specially designed to assist in the control of the mosquito species responsible for dengue fever, an important, world-wide, sometimes fatal, viral disease. Field trials have demonstrated that the device significantly reduces the mosquito vector population. Negotiations are underway to license the technology to a commercial firm for worldwide distribution.

Board-certified by the Entomological Society of America, Zeichner has written numerous government reports and publications in the open peer-reviewed literature, and has given many scientific and military presentations.

Zeichner, his wife, Janice, and their three children, Nicole, 17, Kevin, 14, and Cory, 12, live in Forest Hill. His main hobbies include sailing, sailboats, and spending time with his family at their summer place off of the Magothy River. He also enjoys walking, gardening, and woodworking.

Eagle scout project helps the Chesapeake Bay and APG

In October 2000, Eagle Scout candidate, Steven Lucas, from Troop 802, Aberdeen, completed his Eagle project. The project was to clean and paint the words ‘Save the Bay’ on approximately 200 storm drains in three residential areas and on Harford Boulevard of Aberdeen Proving Ground. The drains now have blue paint with white letters, ‘Save the Bay,’ on them.

“All the storm drains located on APG lead to the Chesapeake Bay,” said Lucas. “Painting ‘Save the Bay’ on the drains will make residents aware of this and eliminate dumping of toxic chemicals and trash into the drains.”

Lucas said a lot had to be accomplished before the project was approved and the actual painting could begin.

“The longest time spent in getting the project underway was the 30 hours it took to do the write up. Next was winning the approval of Mike Balog, Eagle project coordinator of the Harford District, Baltimore Area Council, Boy Scouts of America, and Robert Weaver, of the Directorate of Public Works,” added Lucas.

Also, the scouts gathered supplies, paint, brushes, straight edges, stencils, paint pans, and paper towels.

“On one of the days that we were painting the drains,” said Lucas, “a concerned citizen called the provost marshal and reported that there was a group of boys vandalizing the curbs. A military police officer was sent to investigate the situation and found out that it was an authorized project to help the community and save the Chesapeake Bay.”

The project took 13 hours over 3 days, and 25 scouts and adults helped out.

Upon completion of this project, Eagle Scout candidate, Lucas, is one step closer to obtaining his Eagle rank, the highest rank in scouting.

Before obtaining the Eagle rank, a scout must earn 21 merit badges and complete a project showing leadership skill and helping the community.

Lucas planned and carried out the “Save the Bay” project, demonstrating his planning and leadership skills.

He is now working on his final merit badge, Personal Management, which he is accomplishing through working with MATCOM Federal Credit Union. This badge has nine requirements.



Photo by CONNIE LUCAS

Steven Lucas is in the final stage of earning the Eagle Rank in Troop 802.

MilitaryWorld.com web site provides information

By John Miele
MilitaryWorld

On Nov. 1 MilitaryWorld.com launched a web site that provides information and services to active and retired military personnel and their families. Founded by armed services alumnae, the site addresses many interests and needs relevant to this audience. It also provides resources to its members in an effort to bring tens of thousands of American heroes closer to one another and their families during periods of separation.

Founder and Chief Operations Officer Ron Steinberg and his partner, Steven Covey developed this site as a result of their professional interactions with active and retired military personnel. From that experience they devoted their business to supporting the nation’s armed forces by providing programs and services that will assist these men and women in securing their families’ financial future and security.

“We offer a unique experience to our members and strive to provide access to the most comprehensive collection of information and services available with the specific needs and interests of

active and retired military personnel and their families,” said Steinberg. “We take pride in providing economic and benevolent programs and resources to our members. Sponsorship of programs that support the United States military family are paramount to our mission, as well as to preserving the history of our nation, past, present and future.”

It is a privately funded endeavor and provides the platform for voices to be heard and lifelong friendships to flourish, regardless of locale. The site contains news and information, email, personal web pages, people locator, featured editorial, News Hound program and a number of other valuable benefits.

“Our Living Heroes editorial staff continuously seek military members who have demonstrated uncommon valor in the face of adversity,” said Steinberg. “By sharing their stories, our military family and civilians can appreciate the service and commitment of our armed forces. Direct correspondence with the profiled heroes will be established for members to offer their support and encouragement.”

Army University Access Online

The Army is launching a major new educational initiative - Army University Access Online. This new initiative is designed to offer eligible soldiers the opportunity to obtain higher education degrees (AA/AS, BA/BS, MA/MS, and Technical Certification) by maximizing the use of technology-based education opportunities.

This program will start at selected installations and will follow soldiers as they move throughout the Army. The program has potential for Army-wide expansion as well as expansion to family members. The potential users of this program could exceed one million.

The Army is looking to contract with a company or consortium to integrate education, technology and program management resources to deliver high-quality online education. The contractor will develop and manage eArmyU.com, a web portal that achieves this integration and provides a single, seamless online interface to soldier-students and administrators.

To this end, the contractor will 1) develop and coordinate a network of participating academic institutions, 2) manage a technology package and Internet services, 3) track course participation and progress, 4) provide online support services and 5) coordinate the award of degrees.

At the Association of the United States Army’s 50th annual meeting in October, Secretary of the Army Louis Caldera set the stage for the Army’s new education initiative.

Army University Access Online is a program to provide universal online education opportunities while soldiers serve throughout the world.

“Essential to our vision of transforming the Army is our commitment to investing in our people,” Caldera said.

Sergeant Major of the Army Jack L. Tilley said the initiative would have an enormous impact on enlisted soldiers.

“The Army University Access Online is exactly what today’s soldiers are looking for - a chance to earn their degrees while they serve,” Tilley said.

“By helping soldiers achieve their personal, professional and educational goals, Army University Access Online reinforces the Army’s commitment to investing in its people.”

(Taken from the website www.eArmyU.com)

Voluntary recall for old chest freezers - a deadly play area for children

By Jane Francis
USCPSC

WASHINGTON, D.C. (Oct. 24, 2000)— In cooperation with the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission, the Association of Home Appliance Manufacturers and its refrigerator/freezer manufacturing members are announcing a voluntary recall initiative to prevent suffocation deaths to children who become trapped inside non-working chest freezers in homes.

Up to 9 million chest freezers were manufactured between 1945 and 1970 before voluntary safety standards went into effect allowing freezers to be opened from the inside.

Although some manufacturers had freezers that were in compliance prior to the 1970 standards, most old chest freezers have latches that can trap a child. Children playing “hide-and-seek” have found the non-working freezers a deadly place to hide. When the lid closes, children can become trapped inside and suffocate - usually in less than ten minutes.

Don’t get left out in the cold - winterize your car

By Sheila Little
APG News

The calendar may not show that it’s winter, but thermostats in the local area over the last few weeks have caused residents to prepare their yards for winter temperatures, don warmer clothes, and turn up the heat.

Taking a few moments to prepare your car for cold temperatures should also be on your ‘to do’ list.

Cal Adams, manager of the Aberdeen Proving Ground Automotive Craft Center, said the recent cold snap may have caught many off-guard after a relatively warm fall. He recommends everyone winterize their vehicles at the first sign of changing weather.

A list of recommendations issued by the Directorate of Safety, Health and Environment includes the following.

Check the battery to make sure it is fully charged. Adams said cars kept outside in cold weather are particularly vulnerable.

“Cold weather can drain a battery,” Adams said. “The smaller the battery, the faster it drains.”

Adams recommends starting idle vehicles at least once a week, and allowing them to run for 15 to 20 to recharge the battery.

Check all fluid levels. Oil should be checked at least once each week. Adams recommends antifreeze of 30-35 degrees below zero. In addition, check brake fluid and use winterized wiper fluid for clearing the windshield.

According to Adams the radiator should be flushed every 2 to 3

years, and fan belts and hoses should be checked for dry rot, especially when the weather turns cold.

Check the exhaust system for cracks, rust, and leaks. It is important to properly maintain the exhaust system to avoid an accidental carbon monoxide incident.

Make sure your wipers are in good condition and replace them if necessary. Check your defroster to make sure it is in good working order. Check brakes and lights and replace if necessary.

Inspect the vehicle’s tires for wear and weak spots, and properly inflate the tires according to the inflation recommendations written in the owner’s manual.

If you and your vehicle are prepared, you may be able to cope with most emergencies until help arrives.

Emergency supplies recommended for your vehicle include a shovel, heavy duty booster cables, flashlight, towing chain, first aid kit, matches, flares or emergency triangle, blanket, scraper, and

Tragically, 27 children died from suffocation between 1980 and 1999 after becoming trapped in the freezers. The deaths occurred in non-working freezers stored outside, in basements or garages. Victims ranged in age from 2 to 14. In many cases, more than one child suffocated inside the freezer.

Consumers should properly dispose of these non-working freezers immediately or disable the latch if disposal is impossible. AHAM has a special toll-free number, 1-800-267-3138 for consumers to call to receive detailed information on identifying the affected units and how to dispose of them or disable the latch. Even if a consumer has a pre-1970 chest freezer that is working, they should still call the toll-free number to get information on what to do when the freezer is no longer working. Consumers also can receive information at http://www.aham.org/freezer_safety.htm.

The freezers that are part of this program were made before 1970 by more than 40 manufacturers, a number of whom do not exist today.

Consumers can determine if their chest freezer poses a hazard by try-



Photo by SHEILA LITTLE

APG News contractor Scott Francis checks the oil in his car as part of regular maintenance. Experts suggest regular checks of exhaust systems, wipers, battery, fluid levels to help prevent wintertime problems.

sand or kitty litter.

In addition, pay attention to road conditions and weather forecasts. Allow extra traveling time for heavy traffic, and changing road and visibility conditions caused by ice and snow.

Adams has one additional suggestion for vehicle owners.

“I’d recommend that you start your car and warm it up for a few minutes before taking off in the morning,” Adams said. He said autos are easier to operate if given time to warm up.

“If you take the time to check your vehicle and prepare it for cold weather, chances are it won’t let you down,” he said.

If you don’t have the time or skill to do vehicle maintenance, take you car to a reliable mechanic. If you possess some mechanical ability, the APG Auto Craft Center, located in building 2379, is well-equipped and open Wednesday-Friday, noon-9 p.m., and Saturday and Sunday, 9 a.m.-5 p.m. Call 410-278-2884/5178 for more information.

Pre-retirement seminar for Federal Employees Retirement System employees

The National Institute of Transition Planning, Inc. will be conducting a FERS pre-retirement seminar on Jan. 18 from 9:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. in building 4117 at Aberdeen Proving Ground. Deadline for registration is Dec. 18. Deadline for cancellation of attendance is 30 days prior to the seminar.

Designed to assist federal employees in making a smooth transition to retirement, this seminar covers the FERS employees’ benefits program in depth. Topics include FERS TransFERS, Federal Employees Group Life Insurance, the Federal Employees Health Benefits program, disability, credible service, annuity calculation, deposit/redeposit, the Thrift Savings Plan (withdrawal options included), choosing the best retirement date, cost of living adjustments, and survivor benefits, Social Security, Medicare and the Voluntary Contributions Program.

This is an interactive distance learning presentation in a classroom setting using lecture, discussion, questions and answers, case studies, and class quizzes. Please notify the program mnager if special needs are required to accommodate an attendee (wheelchair access, interpreter, etc.).

Tuition is estimated at \$30 per participant. All costs (tuition, plus travel and per diem for those coming from other sites) must be borne by the nominee’s organization. Do not attend without confirmation from your training coordinator or administrative officer. For more information contact Frank Trout, program manager, 410-306-1202, email to: frank.trout@cpocner.apg.army.mil.

SATURDAY
December 2
“MERRY CHRISTMAS, HON”

Jarrettsville VFW Post 8672 presents a modern version of Charles Dickens’ classic play “A Christmas Carol.” Adapted by former APG employees and ‘APG Players’ Nancy and Ralph Denton Sr., the play takes place in present-day Baltimore and flashes back to familiar places from the Korean War and World War 2. Cost is \$10 for adults, \$3 for children under 12. VFW Post 8672 is located on Morse Road. Show starts at 7 p.m. Hotdogs, hamburgers, snacks and beverages will be sold an hour before the performance. For further information call 410-452-5840 or email: theatrechmn@aol.com.

ROYE-WILLIAMS HOLIDAY CRAFT FAIR

Roye-Williams Elementary School will be holding their annual “Holiday Craft Fair” from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. There will be pictures with Santa, lots of craft vendors and of course food. The Scholastic Book Fair will also be going on the same day. Come and enjoy the festivities and do some Christmas shopping at the same time. All proceeds go the Roye-Williams Parents and Teachers Association and the students.

LONGABERGER BASKET BINGO

The Good Shepherd Catholic School located on 810 Aiken Avenue in Perryville will sponsor a Longaberger Basket Bingo at 7 p.m. Doors open at 6 p.m. There will be a bake sale and drinks are available. Cost is \$10 per ticket (three cards), and \$5 for additional sets of three cards. For tickets, call the Good Shepherd School at 410-642-6265, or Brenda Conjour, 410-273-7332. Proceeds benefit the Good Shepherd Catholic School.

STARRY STARRY NIGHT

Harford Community College and the Harford County Astronomical Society will sponsor a public observance session on the open grassy area next to Joppa Hall on the HCC campus, from 8 to 10 p.m. Members of the Astronomical Society will be on hand to share their large telescopes and binoculars and to answer questions. Everyone in the community is invited to view the first quarter moon, Mars and other heavenly objects. The Astronomy Open House is free and open to the public. In the event of clouds or inclement weather, the event will be rescheduled to Jan. 6 from 8 to 10 p.m. For more information, call 410-734-6643.

MOVIES

Post Theater admission is \$3 for adults, \$1.50 for children.

THE EXORCIST

Friday, Dec. 1, 7 p.m.
Starring: Linda Blair, Ellen Burstyn

Doctors are fearful of a young girl’s illness as it appears to have reached beyond the physical and into the spiritual. Her mother calls a priest, but even he doubts that evil has come into their home, into her body. And the more he doubts, the more powerful it becomes. There is only one cause and only one hope for a cure. (Rated R)

THE LITTLE VAMPIRE

Saturday, Dec. 2, 7 p.m.
Starring: Alice Krige, James Carter

A little boy meets a new friend who happens to be a vampire. Together, they embark on a grand adventure to find a magic pendant needed to save the vampire community from a life of eternal darkness. (Rated PG)

MEET THE PARENTS (FREE ADMISSION)

Saturday, Dec. 2, 9 p.m.
Starring: Robert De Niro, Ben Stiller

Everything that could possibly go wrong for groom-to-be Greg does. The problems begin with Greg’s disastrous first meeting with his girlfriend’s family - most notably her intimidating father Jack - and it’s all downhill from there. (Rated PG-13)

LEAVE DONATION

Employees eligible for donations in the
Voluntary Leave Transfer Program are:

Ameneh M. Arasten (maternity)	William Klein
Fay Walker Banker (hip replacement)	Yvonne Lissimore (knee-surgery)
Marian Bellis (Fracture of left tibia)	Rebecca G. Mercer-Leto (heart attack)
Barbara Boyd (mother is ill)	Nicholas J. Lombardo, Jr. (heart attack)
Bonnie Bromley (liver transplant)	Stacy Miller (maternity)
Daniel Brown (father has emphysema)	Mary V. Overstreet (twisted and sparained wrists and legs)
Tammy Budkey	Debi L. Petosky (back surgery)
Angela D. Cheek	Lylis Payne
Nancy Coleman-Jones (surgery)	Cecil Pennington (surgery)
Dawn Crouse (surgery)	Albert Potter (coma)
Bonnie K. Day (surgery)	Barbara Carol Remines (surgery)
Tricia Lin Dietz	Michael Reynolds
Fred Dill	Janice M. Rice (assist ill mother)
Surinder K. Dillon (son has cancer)	Denise Robinson (maternity)
Joseph R. Dugan	Ricky Ross (heart attack)
Messina Enderlein	Tami C. Rowland (Maternity)
Wayne Erb (wife is ill)	Allan Scarborough (back surgery)
Willa Freisheim	Sherry Schaffer
Penelope K. Galoff (maternity)	Lena Shelton
Norman L. Greear	Motoko Stahl
Michael L. Hitchcock (surgery)	Francis L. Thomas
Stephen Howard (bone marrow transplant)	Joseph Walker (wife has cancer)
Wayne A. Jaynes	Rosalind Walters Kenion
Evelyn K., Johnson (surgery)	(maternity)
Larry Jonas	Cecelia Walton (respiration problems)
Carole Jones	Willie Williams
Marlin Julian (heart surgery)	Charles Young (kidney and pancreas transplant)
Jennifer Keetley (maternity)	
Beverly King (caring for husband)	

For information about donating annual leave, call Dave Mial; 410-278-1524; or fax 410-278-7877.

WEDNESDAY
DECEMBER 6
CHECKING ACCOUNT MANAGEMENT CLASS

Army Community Service will hold a class on Checking Account Management. The course explains the banking system and gives a hands-on balancing act of the checkbook. Training is conducted in ACS building 2754 from 11:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. To register for class, call Tricia Jewitt at 278-4372

THURSDAY
DECEMBER 7
ABERDEEN AREA TREE LIGHTING

The Aberdeen Area tree lighting will take place at the Post Theater, building 3245, at 7 p.m.

FRIDAY
DECEMBER 8
LONGABERGER BASKET BINGO

The parents and adults of Boy Scout Troop 429 will sponsor Longaberger Basket Bingo, 7 p.m. at the Aberdeen Fire Hall, Rogers St., Aberdeen. Doors open at 6 p.m.; there will be food, a bake sale and drinks, door prizes, raffles and special games. Cost is \$10 per ticket (three cards), and \$5 for additional sets of three cards. For tickets, call Amy Carlson, 410-939-6429. Proceeds benefit Boy Scout Troop 429.

SATURDAY
DECEMBER 9
389TH ARMY BAND HOLIDAY CONCERT

The 389th Army Band (AMC’s Own), will hold a holiday concert in the Post Theater, building 3245, beginning at 7 p.m.

CHRISTMAS PRIZE BINGO

Water Witch Fire Company, Station 7-2, located at Abrahams Road and Tome Highway, Port Deposit, will hold a Christmas Prize Bingo at 7 p.m. Cost for adults is \$10 per ticket (cards for 20 games), and \$5 for additional packs of cards. Cost is \$5 for children under 10 years of age. Tickets are available at the door. Door prizes, refreshments, toys, gifts, raffles and more will be offered. All children must be accompanied by an adult. For more information or to purchase tickets, call 410-378-3338 or 410-378-9169. Proceeds benefit the Ladies Auxiliary to the Water Witch Fire Company.

Gift Wrapping Schedule Nov. 30 to Dec. 24

NOVEMBER:

Thursday 30 - 9 a.m. to 9 p.m.
Cub Scout Troop 924
Teresa Thomas, 410-297-5933,
410-278-3658

DECEMBER:

Friday 1 - 9 a.m. to 9 p.m.
389th Army Band (AMC’s Own)
Staff Sgt. Michelle Gould, 410-278-4370

Saturday 2 - 9 a.m. to 9 p.m.
Kirk NCO Fellowship
Staff Sgt. Jackson, 410-278-1725

Sunday 3 - 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.
Filipino American Association
Upper Chesapeake
Command Sgt. Maj. Posadas,
410-278-8595
Monday 4 - 9 a.m. to 9 p.m.
520th Family Readiness Group
Marcie Perez, 410-676-6994

Tuesday 5 - 9 a.m. to 9 p.m.
Protestant Women of the Chapel
Nancy Brew, 410-272-1098

Wednesday 6 - 9 a.m. to 9 p.m.
Military Civilian Spouse Club
Myra Kearney, 410-297-9614

Thursday 7 - 9 a.m. to 9 p.m.
520th Soldier Support Group
Sgt. 1st Class Joseph Perez,
410-436-7147

Friday 8 - 9 a.m. to 9 p.m.
Protestant Women of the Chapel
Nancy Brew, 410-272-1098

Saturday 9 - 9 a.m. to 10 p.m.

EA/AA Youth Services-Teens
Donna Woodards, 278-4995

Sunday 10 - 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.
Headquarters and Headquarters
16th Ordnance Family Support
Group
1st Sgt. Gray, 410-278-5405

Monday 11 - 9 a.m. to 9 p.m.
Red Cross
Carol Mahonti, 410-273-5033

Tuesday 12 - 9 a.m. to 9 p.m.
Take Off Pounds Sensibly
(TOPS)
Virginia Davis, 410-273-7110

Wednesday 13 - 9 a.m. to 9 p.m.
16th Ordnance Battalion Family
Support Group
Command Sgt. Maj. Posadas,
410-278-8595

Thursday 14 - 9 a.m. to 9 p.m.
Better Opportunities for Single
Soldiers
Sgt. King, 410-278-4202

Friday 15 - 9 a.m. to 9 p.m.
Edgewood Elementary PTA
Marcy Perez, 410-676-6994

Saturday 16 - 9 a.m. to 9 p.m.
Protestant Women of the Chapel
Nancy Brew, 410-272-1098

Sunday 17 - 10 p.m. to 6 p.m.
Air Force Wives
Carla Davis, 410-278-2848

Monday 18 - 9 a.m. to 9 p.m.
Warrant Officers Association
Warrant Officer Hill, 410-278-3170

Tuesday 19 - 9 a.m. to 9 p.m.
Roye Williams PTA
Donna Dease, 410-273-1487

Wednesday 20 - 9 a.m. to 9 p.m.
520th Theater Army Medical
Laboratory Soldier Support
Sgt. 1st Class Joseph Perez,
Angela Conlon, 410-436-2306

Friday 22 - 9 a.m. to 9 p.m.
U.S. Army Ordnance Center
and Schools Command & Staff
Soldier Readiness
Donna Deitz, 410-273-1487

Saturday 23 - 9 a.m. to 10 p.m.
16th Ordnance Battalion
Family Support Group
Command Sgt. Maj. Posadas,
410-278-8595

Sunday 24 - 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.
16th Ordnance Battalion
Soldier Support Group
Command Sgt. Maj. Posadas,
410-278-8595

SUNDAY
December 10
HOLIDAY HARMONY HAPPENING

“It’s A Wonderful Life, Mr. Grinch,” will be presented by the Upper Chesapeake Chorus, Sweet Adelines International at St. Mary Magdalen Mission on Route 22 in Bel Air at 3 p.m. The 40-member chorus, under the direction of Cydney Wentsel will take you on a humorous and harmonic adventure to find out what life would be like if there were no Christmas. Joining the chorus in presenting holiday favorites and other tunes performed in four-part a cappella harmony will be four of the registered chapter quartets, including Fire & Ice, Fourocious, Secrets and The Pleasure of Your Company. Ticket prices are \$8 in advance, \$10 at the door; and students and seniors are half price. For tickets or more information, call 410-575-7602 or 410-877-9780.

TREE LIGHTING IN THE EDGEWOOD AREA

The tree lighting in the Edgewood Area will take place at the Edgewood Area Chapel, building E-4620, at 6 p.m.

GOOD NEWS

The Edgewood Baptist Church and the APG Post Chapel Church choirs will present “That’s the Good News,” a Christmas musical, 7 p.m. at the Edgewood Baptist Church, located at 422 Edgewood Road, Edgewood. Everyone is invited to attend. Admission to the concert is free; nursery services will be provided. For more information, call the church office at 410-676-5838.

WEDNESDAY
December 13
EA-OWC ANNUAL COOKIE EXCHANGE

The Edgewood Area Officers’ Wives Club is holding its Annual Cookie Exchange and soup and salad lunch on Wednesday, Dec. 13. The lunch and cookie exchange will be held at Denise Doesburg’s home, 4670 Parrish Road, Edgewood. A social hour begins at 11:30 a.m. and lunch will be served at 12 p.m. Members of the Military and Civilian Spouses Club and EA-OWC are invited to bring four dozen cookies—one dozen to share for dessert and three dozen to exchange. Guests are reminded to bring a container for take-home selections. Members of both clubs are invited to attend even if they choose not to bring cookies to exchange. Call Diane Payne at 410-569-5116 or Jenna Edens at 410-676-1487 with your reservation by Friday, Dec. 8.

SUNDAY
DECEMBER 17
GOOD NEWS

The Edgewood Baptist Church and the APG Post Chapel Church choirs will present “That’s The Good News,” a Christmas musical, 7 p.m. at the Edgewood Baptist Church, located at 422 Edgewood Road, Edgewood. Everyone is invited to attend. Admission to the concert is free; nursery services will be provided. For more information, call the church office at 410-676-5838.

TIP OF THE MONTH

Beware of the government credit card

Use your government credit card for its intended use only - TRAVEL. Personal items, such as books, clothes and cd’s are prohibited purchases. Illegal use of government credit cards can cause financial as well as personal trouble.

LIBRARY UPDATE

The Garrison Library has new arts and crafts books for your reading pleasure. Come by either the Aberdeen Area Library or the Edgewood Area Branch Library and check out some books.

Attics: Your Guide to Planning and Remodeling

The Best American Essays of the Century

Building Big by David Macaulay

The Classic Era of American Comics by Nicky Wright

Exterior Home Improvement Costs

Interior Home Improvement Costs

Jackstraws: Poems by Charles Simic

Jazz in American Culture by Burton W. Peretti

Sister Wendy’s American Collection by Wendy Beckett

Vogue Knitting Mittens & Gloves

The Aberdeen Area Library is located at building 3320 Aberdeen Blvd. Operating hours are Monday through Wednesday, 11:30 a.m. to 7:30 p.m., Thursday and Friday closed, Saturday and Sunday 1 to 5 p.m.

The Edgewood Area Library is located at building E-4405 Austin Road. Operating hours are Wednesday and Thursday, 11:30 to 7:30 p.m., Monday, Tuesday, Friday and Saturday closed, Sunday 1 to 5 p.m.

MWR UPDATE

Edgewood Arts & Crafts is open on Thursday from 1-9 p.m., Friday & Saturday from 9-5 p.m. and is available to active duty military personnel, civilians working on post and their dependents. It is located in building E-4440 next to the Military Police station. There are signs on post directing people to the building. For more information call 410-436-2153 during listed operating hours. Several upcoming classes are as follows:



Giving thanks the APG way

By **Yvonne Johnson**
APG News

Throughout the Aberdeen Proving Ground community the national day of giving thanks was celebrated in various ways.

Young and old came together to count their blessings over bounties of food in the traditional setting of friends and family dating back to the Pilgrim era.

In one pre-Thanksgiving gathering the parents, childrens and staff of the Edgewood Area's Child Development Center shared a Nov. 21 feast. The annual potluck dinner featured home dishes and festively decorated classrooms.

To compliment the evening, some parents showed up in pilgrim and Indian costumes, a tribute to the original Thanksgiving.

"The decorations are part of the art project we have in preparation for the dinner," said Cassandra Howell, lead child care provider in the 3-5 year old classroom.

"The children really look forward to having

the parents in, and the parents get to learn more about the place where their children spend so much of their time," Howell added.

One parent, Lt. Col. Mary Laedtke, an ergonomist with the U. S. Army Center for Health Promotion and Preventive Medicine, agreed. Laedtke, dressed as a pilgrim, enjoyed her third consecutive holiday meal in the classrooms. She was joined by her husband, Mike Brennecke, her 4-year old son Matthew, and 6-year old daughter, Mikayla.

Laedtke said the occasion gives parents who normally rush in and out of the facility "the opportunity to get to know the providers and the surroundings." "This is a great way for us to show appreciation for all the providers," she said.

A board member on the post's Parent-Childcare Association, Laedtke said she regularly participates in activities geared toward helping with childcare on post.



Photo by YVONNE JOHNSON

John Pentikis and his daughter Elizabeth 4, enjoy a fruity dessert of oranges after a pre-Thanksgiving potluck dinner at the Edgewood Area Child Development Center. Parents, children and caregivers dined together during the annual event that is held Thanksgiving week.

Maryland homeless veterans remembered year-round

By **Yvonne Johnson**
APG News

While most people know about the many Veterans Day programs held throughout the state on Nov. 11, few realize that not many of those ceremonies include homeless veterans.

The state of Maryland has gone to great lengths to let its homeless know they are not forgotten through year-round efforts to restore independence and stability to former service members lives.

A full two months before Veterans Day, the

Baltimore Stand Down 2000 for Homeless Veterans was held at Fort Howard Veterans Affairs Medical Center in September. Sponsored by the VA Maryland Health Care System, VAMHCS, the three-day event offered the services of state and local community service agencies to Maryland's homeless veterans.

The term Stand Down is a military combat term describing when front line troops were removed to a place of relative safety for rest before being returned to combat.

The 2000 Stand Down was the Baltimore's first coordinated community effort held specifically for homeless veterans and their families. More than 300 volunteers from veteran service organizations, local supporting agencies and the VA Maryland Health Care System were on hand to assist. An estimated 4,200 meals were served.

Veterans make up nearly one third of the U.S. adult homeless population. An estimated 225,000 veterans may be homeless any given night, 4,000 or

more in Maryland.

During the Baltimore Stand Down, more than 150 veterans were housed on the grounds of Fort Howard in GP-medium tents provided by Aberdeen Proving Ground. During the three-day period they were given physical exams, dental and eye exams, mental health screenings, substance abuse counseling, employment and job assistance, veterans benefits counseling, legal services, referral and access to long-term treatment facilities, clothing, food, haircuts, and were offered financial, spiritual, mental health and employment counseling. Many also received alcohol and drug counseling and follow-up referrals to treatment facilities.

Dale E. Smith, director of the Domiciliary Care Program at VAMC Perry Point, said the purpose of the stand down was to help homeless veterans regain a productive lifestyle.

"Hopefully, we can get them into the programs they need to get off the streets," Smith said.

"If only a few can become self sufficient then this whole thing is worth it."

Smith also is director of the Domiciliary Care for Homeless Veterans (DCVH) program at Perry Point. DCVH is a four-month residential program designed to help residents become physically and emotionally stable so they may return to the outside world as productive members of the community.

Smith said a multitude of organizations collaborated to ensure a safe and productive event.

Two nurse practitioners and a health technician worked out of the Mobile Health Care Clinic from VAMHCS, providing health screenings, treating minor ailments and injuries, providing referrals for follow-ups and taking photographs for identification cards via an electronic hookup with VA Baltimore.

Representatives from the state's Department of Labor, Licensing and Regulation provided job counseling and skills evaluations.

Meals were prepared on site by a mobile kitchen crew from the 229th Maintenance Support Battalion, Maryland Army National Guard from Fort Meade.

Sgt. 1st Class Joseph Leonard, the dining facility manager, supervised a crew of six cooks and a small work detail in the preparation of seven hot meals.

Smith said a host of community-based agencies donated clothing, blankets and toilet articles for veterans and their family members. Many left wearing fresh, VA-issued battle dress uniforms, combat boots and carrying their possessions in laundry bags.

"We were able to purchase frames and lenses and were able to provide eye glasses on the spot," Smith said. "Some hadn't worn a pair of glasses in years."

All the veterans expressed their appreciation at the closing ceremonies held in the compound's main tent.

Kenneth Shell, an Army Infantry soldier from Baltimore, said the weekend changed his perspective.

"They treated me like I have the most honorable discharge there is," Shell said, adding that he found out through VA counselors his undesirable discharge from 30-years ago was being upgraded to honorable.

"They were just waiting to hear from me and I had no idea," Shell said.

Now a part-time piano teacher at the United House of Prayer in Liberty Heights, Shell said he is grateful for the programs that help him stay "on track."

"With God's help I can stay clean," Shell said. "This three days really has helped me."

Patricia Hall, a Vietnam era veteran, said she has been unemployed since January. A respiratory therapist by trade, Hall said she was particularly pleased with the services for women veterans offered during the stand down.

"Medical services were outstanding," Hall said. "They knew what I needed better than I did."

Many of the veterans agreed alcohol and drug addictions sidetracked their lives.

VAMHCS offers comprehensive substance abuse treatment for veterans at each facility.

For more information, call the Baltimore division at 410-605-7000, the Fort Howard division at 410-447-1800 or the Perry Point division at 410-642-2411.

Education at top of commissary shopping list

EDUCATION, from page 5

a medical crisis.

"Fisher House Foundation is delighted to join DeCA and its suppliers in providing scholarships for military family members," said Arnold Fisher, Chairman of Fisher House Foundation and nephew of its founder, Zachary Fisher.

Commissaries have a long tradition of supporting the military community through good-will programs such as vendor-sponsored educational and charitable promotions, cooperative efforts with community quality of life programs, and employee involvement in a wide range of installation activities. Ongoing programs supported include scholarships, military cooking schools, a

ACS seminars promote parent/teen communication

By **Yvonne Johnson**
APG News

It is said that communication is the key to relationships. For some parents of teenagers, the process can also involve a persistent search for the lock.

Two recent seminars, sponsored by the Army Community Service Family Advocacy Program offered the two groups invaluable guidance on breaking down today's generational barriers.

Joshua N. Okundaye, Ph. D., an assistant professor in the department of Social Work at the University of Maryland Baltimore County, paid three visits to Aberdeen Proving Ground this month to hold two teen summits in the Aberdeen and Edgewood areas and an adult seminar at ACS, building 2754.

The youth summits, titled "Life Skills: Tool Box for Teens," featured thought-provoking issues designed to empower youths to make good choices.

The adult seminar, titled "Our Teenagers: What Makes Them Tick?" explored the issues that young people face today and offered suggestions on how to help them through challenging times.

ACS director, Celestine Beckett, said Okundaye is a noted family therapist who focuses on enhancing teenager's self esteem and improving the communication process between teens and their parents.

"Dr Okundaye is an exceptional communicator who is very adept at getting people to respond to him," Beckett said. "We plan to invite him back for follow-up seminars."

Okundaye's sessions are part ACS's preventive education program for teens and parents, said Family Advocacy Program prevention specialist, Wanda Pelt.

"These annual sessions are designed to give families a better understanding of each other," Pelt said adding that both groups respond well and offer positive feedback at every session's conclusion.

In the EA Youth Center, more than 20 youths gathered in the TV room, for the 3-hour session. Many of them remembered Okundaye from previous visits. Together, they spent the evening discussing the positive and negative aspects of being adolescents. The youths, age 13-18, gradually opened up and soon were interacting animatedly with Okundaye and each other.

Focusing on the subject of respect, he had them write down what respect meant to them, then went around the room discussing each definition.

"Every one deserves to be respected," Okundaye told the youths. "Self respect and respecting others is the key to being respected."

The subjects progressed to different teen issues with everyone offer-

ing input.

"This is all about empowering teens with tools for survival," Okundaye said at the summit's "To open the doors to communication, you must let them talk about the things they want to talk about. Conversations after that yield more good than any forced conversation."

The summits are held to let teens know they can talk to their parents and still be teenagers, he added.

"We want them to know the center is a safe place for them to come to be among friends and offload some of their problems."

During the parent's summit two weeks later, Okundaye focused on dealing with adolescents and their personality changes.

They discussed risk taking, rebellion and the importance of not treating adolescents like children.

"Less rules allow teenagers room to make their own mistakes. 'Parents should say, 'I know you're not a kid anymore.'" Okundaye said. "Without that it becomes a battle for control."

"Teens naturally reject attempts to control them," he added. "They need to learn to focus on the few important rules within your control."

He added that parents should ask questions that may bring bad news.

"If you know your child is struggling in Algebra, and he hasn't said anything, ask him how he's doing in Algebra. Chances are, if you're not

getting any bad news, you're not getting the whole story."

The parents took turns discussing the challenges they face at home with their teens with Okundaye interjecting comments and suggestions along the way.

In closing, he encouraged them to continue to keep the lines of communication open.

"Struggle is normal in families," Okundaye said. "Your coming here shows you are ready to be educated about your children."

Staff Sgt. Patrick Spellicy and his wife Bonnie Spellicy, the parents of two teenage daughters, said they appreciated Okundaye's comments and suggestions.

"We learned a lot from a fresh perspective," Patrick Spellicy said. "I just wish more people had come out to share their stories."

"Military families may have common issues other families don't have," added Bonnie Spellicy. "There's no reason why we can't all learn from each other."

Pelt assured the parents that Okundaye would return for follow-up sessions as he has done for the past six years.

"The program is working," Pelt said. "Watching families grow stronger and happier together is the best part."

Pelt is a registered nurse and the wife of Staff Sgt. Eric Pelt of Company C, 16th Ordnance Battalion.

Dining facilities go all out for annual Thanksgiving day competition

Photos by LA'MONT HARBISON



Above, Command Sgt. Maj. Carlos Estronza, center, gives the “thumbs up” sign as Sgt. 1st Class Stewart Nagel, right, gives building 4503 dining facility manager, Gerard Laruffa, an individual medallion for his seafood display. Laruffa said he got the idea from his screen saver. “It’s a clear representation of Maryland,” Laruffa said.



Left top, a display of breads and vegetables in dinig facility 4503 earned its designer a gold medal.



Left bottom, a gold medallion awarded by dining facility evaluators, hangs from a flower basket in the Edgewood Area dining facility, building E-4225. Designed by first cook, Wan Kirskey, the flowers are made of peppers, turnip roots, onions and food coloring. Miniature pumpkins and hay complete the holiday look.



Above, Pvt. Sean Ardilla, left, presents a gold culinary medallion to Zaida Alcaraz, manager for dining facility 4219, for a succulent steamship round of beef. A member of Company B, 16th Ordnance Battalion, Ardilla thanked Alcares for “greeting us with a smile every day.”



Left, two cornucopias one of bread, left, and one of ice, frame a stuffed turkey and two ducks on a bed of iceberg lettuce in building 4219.

Below, first cook, Vi Laruffa carves a turkey roll in building 4219 before the start of the holiday meal. Laruffa is the wife of Gerard Laruffa, the dining facility manager in building 4503.

